



a little bit of happiness



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Chapter 1 by Brad Vicroy

Chapter One

She sits in the corner crying again. A fairly regular occurrence in her life. It's quite sad really that something as simple as words on a page can induce such shedding of tears. Only yesterday things were finally looking quite normal for her again.

She was offered a position as a waitress in a downtown diner. Sure it may not sound like much to most people, but to her it was another chance of independence. She was starting over again. Starting over...the number of times she has said that it almost brings tears to my eyes.

Looking down in her hand again she sees the letter and the envelope it came in. She picks up the envelope and reads the return address again:

4350 Bielefeld St.
New Knoxville, OH 45871

Her father never did like to put his name on anything. He never wanted to own up to anything. Even she was cast out. Now you know why she is crying.

She thinks hard about the last time she heard from her dad. 10 years? 12? She remembers the day she left as if it were yesterday, but how long ago was that? It seems like a lifetime in itself.

How different things were then.

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she recognizes daddy's little girl again and a small smile briefly crosses her face showing the tiniest of dimples in her cheeks.

Daddy's little girl. She used to be so proud of that so many years ago. There was a time when she would have given anything to have those days back, but that time was gone. It passed many years ago with the struggles she endured since.

After cleaning her face she went to the kitchen and poured a glass of water and sat at her small wobbly table. Still holding the letter she looked at it again. She still couldn't believe that she was holding a letter from her dad in her hand.

The phone rings. She moves to answer it and changes her mind. Ring. Ring. There is no answering machine because the last one broke and she can't afford to replace it. She knows if it is important that they'll call back. Likely to be a collector or creditor anyway. She doesn't have many friends. The phone stops.

She examines the letter again. It's written on fine linen paper. Apparently he wanted to be taken seriously. He wrote with a black pen in this half cursive half print sort of way that he always wrote. A sign of laziness from a now lazy man. At least that is what she thought of him now. She sits and thinks of all the things that led her to where she is right now and feels the rush of tears coming back but she fights them off. She refuses to cry again. She is strong and she wouldn't still be here if she wasn't.

She decides to read the letter once more. As she unfolds the page she notices the watermarks that her tears had made. A few large droplets that smeared the ink. Having read the letter three times already, it made no difference. She didn't have to read it to know what it said.

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My Dearest Little Bit,

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I can't begin to describe to you the difficulty I had sitting down to write this letter to you. Where shall I begin? And to be so off base, I can't imagine what you might be feeling while reading this

letter. I only hope you do take the time to read it.

Many years have passed since we last spoke and I'm so ashamed. I'm ashamed of what I've become. I'm ashamed of what I have done. But mostly I'm ashamed that I haven't been able to be apart of your life for the last ten years. Oh how I want you back in my life.

People are always saying that time heals all wounds, but I'm afraid that the wounds have only gotten deeper for me. I can't imagine what life has been like for you since you left home, but I also can't imagine it has been easy. I know that you blame me for that, and you should. I deserve at least that from you.

I hope you know that my life has felt much like a prison sentence since you have been gone. I have been caged in the depression that surrounded every moment of my life. After you left it was difficult to find a reason to keep on going.

I found that reason to live again. It's you. I live for you and the hope that one day you will come back to me. I want you back in my life again Little Bit.

I don't expect you to come to me with open arms. God knows I don't deserve that. But I hope that you'll listen. I hope that you'll give me a chance to win you back.

I won't come to visit and I won't call. Not unless you write back to me and tell me it's ok. I don't want to force myself back in your life as if that's something I'm entitled to. I want to earn it. I want you to want me back too, and I'm going to work to get it.

I'll write you again soon. My only hope is that you'll keep reading the letters. Perhaps you'll decide to return a letter to me someday as well. Even if you won't I'm not going to give up. You are my hope. You are my will and reason. You are my Little Bit of Happiness in this pitiful, pitiful life I've made for myself.

I love you with all my heart. I hope you'll love me back and never let go.

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With All My Love.

Dad

*

She again wiped the tears from her face. She took out a pen and wrote on the letter. She stuffed it in the envelope and resealed it. You couldn't tell it had been opened. On the back of the envelope she crossed out her address and wrote Return to Sender. She left her apartment and went down her steps to the street with the letter in her hand. She walked to the corner and dumped the letter down the mouth of a postal drop box and returned to her apartment.

*

Back at home a man walks to his mailbox several mornings later and finds the letter with Return to Sender on the back with his daughters address crossed out. He nearly broke down crying until he noticed the tiniest of tears on the opening of the envelope. Upon further inspection he recognizes the Return To Sender written in his daughter's hand writing.

He tears open the letter and the envelope falls to the ground in pieces. He unfolds the page and in big thick scribbled letters he reads across the page:

LIAR

Devastated the man falls to his knees. He sits by the mailbox by the road of his house and cries into his hands. His hands are crushing the letter between his fingers. His chest pounds and he finds it difficult to breathe.

Then he suddenly stops. A thought crosses his mind and he gathers his strength.

She read the letter. There is still hope.

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